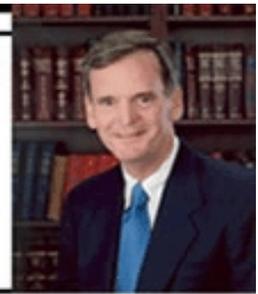

NEWS RELEASE

Judd Gregg

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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GREGG ANNOUNCES \$400,000 FOR TWO INITIATIVES ADDRESSING DREDGING OF PISCATAQUA APPROVED BY SENATE COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH), a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, today announced that two studies examining the potential dredging of various sections of the Piscataqua River are in line to receive \$400,000 in federal funding. The projects include: \$300,000 for the New Hampshire Division of Ports and Harbors to perform an investigation of potential upland disposal sites of dredge material; and \$100,000 to perform a study on proposed channel and turning basin widening for the Portsmouth Harbor channel. The Fiscal Year 2004 Energy and Water Appropriations measure was approved by the full Appropriations Committee this afternoon, and is now ready for consideration by the full Senate later this year.

Senator Gregg stated, "The entire State of New Hampshire relies on goods shipped into the State through Portsmouth Harbor and other economic activities surrounding the Piscataqua. In order for the coming and going of commercial vessels to be safe and efficient, the depth of the River must be maintained at a certain level, and that often means removing sediment from the bottom of the River. The dredging, however, must be done in a way that does not disturb the delicate balance of the environment in and around the River, and these funds will ensure that the State is able to strike the proper balance between a safe and thriving economic use of the Piscataqua River without sacrificing the ecology of the River and possible sites for the disposal of the sediment."

Geno Marconi, Director of the Pease Development Authority Division of Ports and Harbors, stated, "Senator Gregg's work on these projects was not only timely but very much appreciated. The recent announcement of funding for the study of an upland disposal site for dredge spoils and funding for the study of the uppermost Piscataqua River turning basin is important news for the ocean commerce in this region. Disposal of dredge spoils in an environmentally conscious manner is a top concern for all dredging projects. The proper disposal of spoils is a major concern in the lengthy permitting process. Ships engaged in ocean commerce are larger now than ever before. Keeping our port a viable tool in international commerce requires the ability to handle large ocean going vessels."

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